

Europe; and, in spite of the presentiments I had always had of the return of the Bourbons to France, I now began to think that event problematic, or at least very remote.

About the beginning of the year 1810 commenced the differences between Napoleon and his brother Louis, which, as I have already stated, ended in a complete rupture. Napoleon's object was to make himself master of the navigation of the Scheldt, which Louis wished should remain free, and hence ensued the union of Holland with the French Empire. Holland was the first province of the Grand Empire which Napoleon took the new Empress to visit. This visit took place almost immediately after the marriage. Napoleon first proceeded to Cornpiegne, where he remained a week. He next set out for St. Quentin, and inspected the canal. The Empress Maria Louisa then joined him, and they both proceeded to Belgium. At Antwerp the Emperor inspected all the works which he had ordered, and to the execution of which he attached great importance.¹ He returned by way of Ostend, Lille, and Normandy to St. Cloud, where he arrived on the 1st of June, 1810. He there learned from my correspondency that the Hanse Towns refused to advance money for the pay of the French troops. The men were absolutely destitute. I declared that it was urgent to put an end to this state of things. The Hanse Towns had been reduced from opulence to misery by taxation and exactions, and were no longer able to provide the funds.

During this year Napoleon, in a fit of madness, issued a decree which I cannot characterize by any other epithet than infernal. I allude to the decree for burning all the English merchandise in France, Holland, the Grand **Duchy** of Berg, the Hanse Towns ; in short, in all places subject to the dis-

¹ The Royalists naturally were ready to decry his labors. "Of all the monuments raised by Napoleon," says Vitrolles (tome i. p. 21(>), "there was not one to shelter a living being. It was not for them that he worked." If the sneer has some truth, it omits such foundations as the school for the daughters of the officers of the *Le*glise d'Honneur* at St. Cyr, and other similar foundations. Thus, if not exactly sheltered, Thiers was educated by one of the scholarships founded by Napoleon. M. Thiers, telling this anecdote in his clever and kindly manner, added, "In granting me thin favor Napoleon no doubt did not foresee that he was forming his future historian" (*Meneval*, tome iii. p. 10).